

Council Member Mike Sullivan's Newsletter

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Council Member Mike Sullivan



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Residents of District E,

Let me first apologize for the delay in publishing our December newsletter. There has been a lot of activity at city hall recently, and it has consumed more time than usual. However, we are here to take on the challenges of running the city, working with the mayor and representing my council district.

Providing basic city services and returning tax dollars to my council district are my highest priorities. When I roll out of bed in the morning, I ask myself, "What can I do to make my council district better?" That has included the new libraries, community centers that are scheduled to break ground in the first quarter of 2011, road improvements, additional uniformed police officers for both Kingwood and Clear Lake, etc. Those projects are great amenities for our community and I am proud to have had a part in them.

This city's fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th. Since we are nearly half way through December, it is fair to say that our fiscal year is half over. That gives us a chance to measure where we are with the city's budget. In short, the city is in the middle of a severe economic crisis. Revenues across the board are down, expenses are up, unfunded mandates from the state and federal government are eating away at our funds, and pension obligations are expected to take more and more of our budget going forward. These are dire times for the City of Houston.

City charter requires that the city pass a "balanced budget". There is no choice, and frankly, I am glad that is the case. We have to learn how to reduce spending. We have to reduce costs. We have to manage our personnel and retirement obligations better. It is impossible to balance a shortfall of \$50 - \$80 million dollars with "efficiencies" as some elected officials are saying. No private sector business could make up that deficit simply by becoming more efficient. That statement alone causes me to ask "Why haven't we been striving for efficiencies before the budget crisis?" I offered almost \$40 million in budget cuts just 6 months ago, but each and every one of them was rejected by Mayor and City Council. I will, however, offer them up again and again, forcing the discussion to reduce costs.

In closing, let me say that there are some good things going on down here, too. We continue to respond to constituent issues, fight for new projects that are needed in our community and work with our other elected officials on regional projects. Be sure to attend our CIP meetings, which should be scheduled soon. They are usually in late January or early February. That is your opportunity to tell me what major capital improvement projects you would like to see in your community.

Thank you for the chance to serve as your council member. It is an honor to do so.

Mike Sullivan
Council Member

Kingwood Town Hall Meeting

Council Member Sullivan held his annual fall town hall meeting in Kingwood on Tuesday, November 30th at Creekwood Middle School. Council Member Sullivan discussed several updates about projects occurring in the district and also had several city departments give presentations regarding city services. In addition, audience members were given the opportunity to present their questions, concerns and input to the council member as well as to the appropriate department representative.

Council Member Sullivan continues to try and keep the line of communication open with his constituents and values community input that is given during these meetings.



Council Member Sullivan with the many city department representatives who attended the meeting.

Houston Arts Alliance Workshop

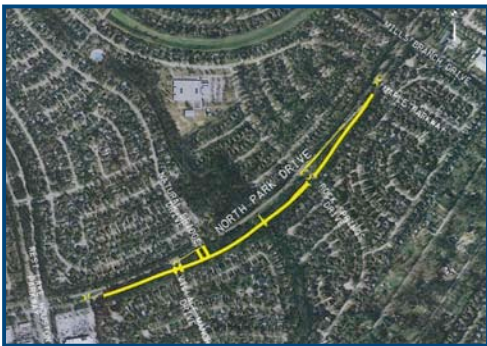
Council Member Sullivan and the Houston Arts Alliance are hosting a workshop in Kingwood on January 13th at Creekwood Middle School. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. and run until 7:30 p.m.

Representatives from HAA will present information about available grants that the organization offers to other organizations that promote arts based programs, events and education. They will also cover the Panel Review Process, which every applicant must go through.

Council Member Sullivan has been active in trying to return these monies to District E and encourages those interested to attend this informative workshop.

For more information, please contact Council Member Sullivan's office at (832) 393.3008.

Northpark Widening



The area of Northpark from West Lake Houston Parkway to just west of Mills Branch Rd. will be widened.

Widening of Northpark construction began last month and is expected to be complete by late April 2011. The project scope includes the construction of approximately 3,587 feet of a new twenty-four foot wide concrete roadway with curbs and gutters, new storm drain pipes with extra capacity, meandering sidewalks that will connect with existing greenbelts, pedestrian tunnels, relocation of village monuments, wide-landscaped medians, and a fully signalized intersection with pedestrian signals and ADA compliant ramps at Rock Springs. Total costs are estimated to be nearly \$1.8 million, and the first phase of construction will consist of clearing the right of way south of the existing lanes.

Even though it is a City of Houston project, funding is partially being provided by the Lake Houston Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ).

For more information, please contact Council Member Sullivan's office at (832) 393.3008 or the contractor, Rozco Contracting, Inc., at (281) 540.0382.

Kingwood Municipal Court Annex Ribbon Cutting

Council Member Sullivan held a ribbon cutting ceremony marking the reopening of the newly renovated Kingwood Municipal Court Annex (Court #22) on Wednesday, November 24. The expansion of the court room was completed and was available for defendants last month. The expansion allows for the Municipal Courts to run the Kingwood court as a fully operating court room. Along with extension of the court hours, this annex court has fulfilled what Council Member Sullivan envisioned for the Kingwood community. With the enlarged space, the Municipal Court Department will be better equipped to see defendants and ensure that they are fully serviced.

The Kingwood Municipal Court Annex is located in the Kingwood HPD Substation located at 3915 Rustic Woods and is open Wednesdays from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and will be closed during the lunch hour from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.



Council Member Sullivan cuts the ribbon with city employees, community members and his staff.

Village Learning and Achievement Center's 6th Annual Gala

Council Member Sullivan and his wife Kim were invited by the Kingwood Medical Center to attend Village Learning and Achievement Center's 6th Annual Charity Gala on November 6th. The gala, held at the Houston Club and emceed by Deborah Duncan, honored VLAC founder Kimberly Brusatori for her initiative to establish the foundation and for providing services to individuals with disabilities and their families. According to the organizations website, the non-profit was created to support the inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in the community. Council Member Sullivan has worked hard to secure grant funds for the Village Learning and Achievement Center with over \$750,000 given since he was sworn in. He congratulates Brusatori for her tremendous efforts and immeasurable success.

Meeting with Humble Mayor Donnie McMannes

Council Member Sullivan met with City of Humble Mayor, Donnie McMannes, to discuss regional drainage and flooding issues. Council Member Sullivan has a great relationship with the City of Humble, and together, they work hard to address local concerns. The meeting focused on recent efforts by the Houston Airport System to improve drainage around Bush Intercontinental Airport and future plans for the City of Humble. Council Member Sullivan and Mayor McMannes will meet soon with the Houston Airport System to discuss future drainage plans to ensure that resources are maximized and improvements are significant.

Breakfast at Station 102

Council Member Sullivan visited and ate breakfast with the B shift at station 102 on November 24th. He visited with fire fighters, gave them an update on what is going on at City Hall, discussed the city's financial picture and listened to their comments and concerns. He thanks District 102 Chief Steve Sparks for hosting him for breakfast.

Pictured: Council Member Sullivan with fire fighter/EMT and "cook" Jimmie Johnston



Eagle Scout Ceremony

Council Member Sullivan was proud to join the Panzarella family and friends in congratulating their son, Joseph C. Panzarella for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout last month. Joseph is a distinguished member of Troop 600 of the Sam Houston Area Council and has served the community with excellence. In order to obtain the rank of Eagle Scout, Panzarella had to demonstrate his mastery in camping and woodsman skills, obtain 21+ merit badges, hold leadership positions in the troop, devote time to service projects and demonstrate that he can walk in the ways of the Scout Law, Oath and Promise. Council Member Sullivan was honored to be among Panzarella's peers and family and congratulates him for his hard work and dedication as a Boy Scout of Troop 600.

Kingwood Park High School Playoff Football Game



On November 20th, Council Member Sullivan joined the community and Kingwood Park's students and staff to help root on the Panther's football team as they played the Dayton Broncos in the second round playoffs at the Woodforest Stadium in the Woodlands. It was a much anticipated game after the Kingwood Panther's beat the Brenham Cubs with a 29-24 win advancing them to the second round. The Dayton team took on an early lead and finished the game with a 42-17 win.

As a former school board member and as a parent of an Humble ISD student, Council Member Sullivan has participated in district athletic events for several years and is proud to see the Panthers advance as far as they did this football season. He congratulates the team and their coaches for an outstanding season.

Single Stream Recycling Expansion

Council Member Sullivan is pleased to announce that the Solid Waste Management Department has expanded their Single Stream Recycling Program to approximately 30,131 homes. Individual neighborhoods were selected including two in Kingwood, Forest Cove and Woodspring Forest. The new 96-gallon carts will be delivered by the first week of December. Collection dates are scheduled on the regular garbage day except occurring every other week.

The Automated Recycling Program has proven more convenient for residences as they can store all recyclables in one container. The City of Houston will take the materials to a private facility where the different items are separated and shipped for market reuse.

For more information please visit www.houstonsolidwaste.org

North Sector Manager

It is with great sadness to announce that Council Member Sullivan's North Sector Manager, Autumn Jodzio, will be leaving City Hall next month. Jodzio has been a part of Council Member Sullivan's staff since day one. She began as an intern and was hired as District E's North Sector Manager due to her experience, outstanding work reputation and familiarity with the Kingwood area.

Beginning in January, Jodzio will be working for the Texas Legislature during the upcoming session. She has accepted a job with Texas State Representative-Elect – District 127 Dan Huberty and will be working in his Austin office.



Council Member Sullivan and the District E team will miss her, but wish her much success!

Project Updates

- Designs are underway for a new community center, which will be located at the old library site. Construction is scheduled to begin late January 2011.
- Widening of Northpark is under design. Construction has begun. Substantial completion is set for late April 2011.
- Intersection improvements at Woodland Hills and North Park Drive are close to completion. Improvements at West Lake Houston and Kingwood Drive began in June and are now complete.

South Shaver Road Public Meeting

A public meeting was held for the proposed widening of South Shaver Road, from I-45 to Highway 3 on Thursday, December 9, 2010. The meeting was conducted by the Texas Department of Transportation and the City of Houston's Department of Public Works & Engineering.

The project includes widening S. Shaver Road from a four lane undivided roadway with open ditches to a six lane divided roadway with raised median, curb and gutter drainage, sidewalks, street lighting and improved underground utilities. The project also includes channel improvements on a portion of the Berry Bayou and a new detention pond that outfalls from S. Shaver Road.

Since taking office Council Member Sullivan has received numerous complaints about the lack of attention to Shaver Road. He has continued to work with Public Works and TXDOT to ensure that this CIP Project be realized during his tenure. After many delays with the other organizations involved in this project, Council Member Sullivan is anxious to see construction scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2012. He encourages residents to attend this meeting to express their concerns and input.

For more information, please contact Council Member Sullivan's office at (832) 393.3008.

Blackhawk Park Lighting Improvements

Council Member Sullivan is proud to announce that city council voted in favor last month to appropriate over \$300,000.00 for outdoor lighting at Blackhawk Park located at 9401 Fuqua Road. This appropriation consists of the purchase, delivery and installation of ball field sports lighting for one soccer and one football field. It also includes seeding for the disturbed areas. This is the second phase of development, and installation of the lighting is scheduled to begin February 1, 2011. Construction will take six to eight weeks to complete.

The Blackhawk Park improvements are funded as a Capital Improvement Project under the Parks and Recreation Department. The entire scope of work consists of a new entry, paved parking for 60 cars with overflow for 30, two soccer fields, football field, multi-use pavilion with restrooms and concessions, playground, tree plantings with irrigation and a picnic area.

Since taking office in 2008, Council Member Sullivan has received numerous requests for lighting at the park and has encouraged the need for such improvements.

Spark Park Dedication



Council Member Sullivan and Principal Courtney Merilatt

The City of Houston's Mayor's Office and the Pasadena Independent School District held a Spark Park Dedication Ceremony at Garfield Elementary November 15th. Council Member Sullivan attended the high energy ceremony and spoke to the kids, faculty and staff. He recognized and thanked those who were involved in transforming the school's park and encouraged the students to take full advantage of having it in their backyard. Following the ceremony, he joined the Spark Park Committee and Garfield's Principal Courtney Merilatt at a reception in the school's library.

Sonrise Shelter Tour

Grace Community Church operates the second largest homeless shelter in the Houston area known as Sonrise Community Church/Center for Empowerment located at 5609 East Mount Houston Road. Council Member Sullivan first worked with Sonrise immediately following Hurricane Ike distributing ice and food to those in need. Since then, he has continued to work closely with the shelter and most recently was given a tour of the facility.

Every day the shelter provides 500 meals to homeless people. It also provides GED education programs, job training, drug/alcohol recovery and is a full family recovery center with counseling and parent-training programs. 2100 adults and 200 kids went through the program in 2009 with 1687 graduating.

Council Member Sullivan thanks Pastor Stu Johnson of Grace Community Church and Sonrise International and Pastor Dr. Edward Buford for the tour and their gracious welcoming.



Pastor Buford, his wife and Council Member Sullivan

Family Pizza Day at HFD Station 93

Council Member Sullivan joined the fire fighters of fire station 93 and their families for a “Family Pizza Day” on Saturday, November 20th. The themed dinner allowed Council Member Sullivan to interact with the men and women from the station and to thank their families for sacrificing their time from their loved ones as they serve the city. Council Member Sullivan makes it a point to visit the stations in his district on a monthly basis, and thanks station 93 for their hospitality.

Project Updates

- Sagemont Community Center design work is complete. Construction should begin in March 2011.
- Outdoor lighting for Law Park is currently being installed.
- Installation of ball field lights at Blackhawk Park was recently approved by city council. Installation should begin January 1st.
- City council approved a \$70,000 contract for a comprehensive flood study at and around Ellington Airport.
- METRO’s newly expanded South Point Park and Ride Lot is open and has an additional 390 parking spaces available for it’s patrons.

Houston Arts Alliance Workshop

Council Member Sullivan and the Houston Arts Alliance are hosting a workshop in the south part of his district on January 19th at San Jacinto College – South Campus in the Marie Flickinger Building, Room 12116. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. and run until 7:30 p.m. Representatives from HAA will present information about available grants that the organization offers to other organizations that promote arts based programs, events and education. They will also cover the Panel Review Process, which every applicant must go through.

Council Member Sullivan has been active in trying to return these monies to District E and encourages those interested to attend this informative workshop.

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BAHEP Membership Appreciation Golf Tournament

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership hosted their annual Membership Appreciation Golf Tournament at Bay Oaks Country Club on November 8th. As a long time member of BAHEP, Council Member Sullivan participated in the tournament and enjoyed a round of golf with team members Bob Mitchell, Joan McKinney from Norman Frede Chevrolet and Jim Sweeney from Minuteman Press.

BAHEP is a member-driven organization that provides the leadership to stimulate regional economic development and employment. Over 260 companies are represented and the organization serves 13 cities, including the City of Houston, as well as Galveston and Harris Counties and the Port of Houston Authority.

BAHEP General Membership Meeting

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership held a general membership meeting featuring Dr. Robert M. Stein on November 17th at the Bay Oaks Country Club. As an expert on urban politics and public policy at Rice University, Dr. Stein presented an election wrap up and policy consequences to BAHEP members and guests. Council Member Sullivan attended the meeting.

Dr. Stein recently held a position on the City of Houston's Term Limits Commission to research and study the pros, cons and effects of extending term limits to elected officials at the city level. As chair of the Redistricting and Term Limits Committee, Council Member Sullivan hosted Dr. Stein at a committee meeting to present the study findings.

Trash Placement

The City of Houston's Solid Waste Management Department is requesting that you help them better serve you by doing the following:

- Place your solid waste and recycling containers at the curb before 7 a.m. of your scheduled collection day.
- Allow five feet between your automated garbage can and recycling cart.
- Avoid placing can or cart behind a parked vehicle.

Failure to do what is mentioned above may result in no service. For more information about your solid waste service, please log onto www.houstonsolidwaste.org. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Project Updates

- Sylvan Rodriguez Park is currently in the programming phase. Construction is scheduled to begin fiscal year 2012.
- Ellington Airport has almost \$50 million dollars in military construction projects now underway.

Veteran's Day



Buddy Grantham, Director of Veteran's Affairs; Paul D. Patrick, Deputy Assistant Sec. of Defense Reserve Affairs and Council Member Sullivan

Council Member Sullivan participated in the city's Veteran's Day ceremonies on the steps of City Hall on November 11th. He joined Congressmen Pete Olson and Gene Green as well as Mayor Parker to show his support in honoring our Armed Forces and celebrating the 12th Annual Houston Salutes American Heroes Veteran's Day Commemoration and Parade. Iraq War Veteran Army Chief Warrant Officer Candis Martin was the keynote speaker who saluted the city's heroes and honored those who have given their lives. A moment of silence was also respected in memory of the WWI signing of the Armistice.

Following the ceremony, the first ever AT&T Veterans Job Fair was held in front of City Hall to encourage returning soldiers to find employment and to return home to productive lives.

HPOU Benefit

The Houston Police Officers Union held a benefit barbecue for HPD Officer and Pearland Volunteer Fire Fighter Phil Yochum on November 19th. Officer Yochum recently lost his courageous two-year battle with colon and liver cancer. He was a 15 _ year veteran of the police department and a volunteer fire fighter at the Pearland Fire Department for the past four years.

Council Member Sullivan is an active and passionate supporter of all the city's law enforcement and public safety personnel, and believes it is important to continue to support the officers and their families after such a loss.

Chiba, Japan Sister City Agreement

On November 1st, the City of Houston signed an agreement to increase economic and technological development with Chiba, Japan. The two have been sister cities since 1972 and the addendum to the existing agreement focuses on increasing economic development and encourages business exchanges between Houston and Chiba City. The Houston Technology Center also signed an agreement with Chiba City in order to exchange best practices and promote technology growth in both cities.

As a member of the International Business Initiative Committee, Council Member Sullivan took particular interest to this and participated in the signing and reception held afterwards for Coshikitokumagai, Mayor of Chiba, Japan.

Sister city parings are official relationships ratified by the mayors and city councils of the respective cities. Houston's sister city program is run by volunteers who form 17 sister city association and Sister Cities of Houston, Inc.



Chiba, Japan delegation with Mayor Parker, Council Member Sullivan and Council Member Jones

Texas Tribune Forum with Mayor Parker and Evan Smith

Council Member Sullivan attended a forum at the Baker Institute at Rice University on November 12th. Texas Tribune's editor-in-chief Evan Smith visited Houston last month to interview Mayor Annise Parker. The interview, which is one of 17 events in the publications TribLive series, covered Houston from Mayor Parker's perspective as current mayor and former council member and controller. Topics posed included how a state budget shortfall and ballooning federal debt impact urban areas and the possibilities for the fourth-largest city in the United States to go green.

2010 Comida News Conference

Council Member Sullivan joined the Houston Police Department and Houston Citizen's Police Academy Alumni Association to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the "Comida" Food Drive during a kick-off press conference on November 29th. Mayor Parker also attended and presented a proclamation. The event, sponsored by Fiesta Mart Inc. and the Pepsi Bottling Company, has grown over the years and continues to support many inner-city families who depend on these donations during the holidays. Last year, 3,500 families received a box of food due to those individuals and sponsors who donated their time and supplies.

The goal for the 2010 "Comida" Food Drive is to again feed 3,500 needy families during this holiday season. Local, inner city churches are the main recipients of the food drive. The food that is collected at 14 Fiesta Marts will be distributed on December 18th to churches that are pre-registered at the Pepsi Plant.

Associated Builders and Contractors Breakfast

Council Member Sullivan joined the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. members at a breakfast on November 17th at Sheraton Brook Hollow. The breakfast featured Jim Elmer, ABC 2010 National Chairman who began his term January 1, 2010. His duties as the National Chairman include leading the executive committee and board of directors, guiding the association national initiatives and serving as the ABC National Spokesperson. He described his duties to the membership and shared his goals and initiatives for the ABC National Chapter at the breakfast.

National Day of Remembrance for Parents of Murdered Children

Every year Council Member Sullivan participates in the National Day of Remembrance for Parents of Murdered Children Memorial at City Hall. On November 26th, several parents and family members gathered on the steps of City Hall to celebrate the lives of their murdered children. Time is taken to recognize the victims by reading their names aloud. Council Member Sullivan had the honor of reading a full month of names of victims who have been taken in the community. It is a moving and emotional ceremony, but one that Council Member Sullivan is committed to.

Traveling Over the Holidays?

The Houston Police Department urges residents to be safe this holiday season. They encourage you to lock up your belongings, watch your surroundings and make sure someone knows if you're going of town. If you will be traveling over the holidays and would like someone to check on your house, please contact the Houston Police Department. An officer will issue an alert slip for your street, and when available, will check on your property.

Kingwood Substation: (281) 913.4500

Clear Lake Substation: (281) 218.3800

Committee Updates

Ethics and Council Governance: As chair of the city's Ethics and Council Governance Committee, Council Member Sullivan convened a meeting last month to roll out a comprehensive reform ordinance on lobbying, disclosure requirements and closing all lobbyist-driven loopholes. The committee examined Chapter 18 of the city's Code of Ordinances and the recommended changes City Attorney David Feldman suggested. This is the first of reform measures for Council Member Sullivan to introduce as he encourages and promotes more transparency in city government.

Heavy Trash

Council Member Sullivan would like to remind District E residents that the City of Houston's Solid Waste Department will pick up Junk Waste in December. Junk Waste is defined as furniture, appliances and other bulky material. Resident's who receive City of Houston trash pick up service can legally put junk waste out of 6:00 p.m. the Friday before their designated pick-up day. Tree waste is accepted during Junk waste months. However, to ensure that your Tree Waste is recycled you may hold your tree waste materials until the next Tree Waste designated month or take it to a neighborhood depository.

Note: The holiday trash pick up schedule is listed on the Solid Waste Department's website. Please visit www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste for more information.



*From all of us at the District E office,
we wish you a Merry Christmas
and Happy Holidays!*



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